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LETTER DATED 6 FEBRUARY 1994 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to refer to the situation in Sarajevo, one of the safe areas which were declared by the Security Council in its resolution 824 of 6 May 1993.

The members of the Security Council will be aware of the incident in Sarajevo on 5 February 1994 when a 120-mm mortar round fired at the central market caused the deaths of at least 58 civilians and injuries to 142 others. This followed a similar attack on the suburb on Dobrinja on 4 February 1994, as a result of which 10 civilians were killed and 18 injured.

Immediately upon receipt of a report of this further atrocity in Sarajevo, I instructed my Special Representative for the former Yugoslavia, Mr. Yasushi Akashi, and the Force Commander of UNPROFOR, General Jean Cot, to proceed to Sarajevo in order to supervise the investigation which I had instructed UNPROFOR to undertake.

I have today been informed by my Special Representative and the Force Commander that, whereas UNPROFOR has established that the round which caused the casualties in Dobrinja on 4 February was fired from a Bosnian Serb position, it has not been possible to establish the source of the attack against the central market on 5 February.

These two incidents make it necessary, in accordance with operative paragraphs 9 and 10 of resolution 836 (1993), to prepare urgently for the use of air strikes to deter further such attacks. I have accordingly written today to the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to seek that Organization's support in this matter. A copy of my letter to Dr. Wörner is annexed to this letter.

I should be grateful if you would convey this information to the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Boutros BOUTROS-GHALI

Annex

Letter dated 6 February 1994 from the Secretary-General addressed to the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

I have the honour to refer to resolution 836, adopted by the United Nations Security Council on 4 June 1993.

In paragraph 9 of that resolution the Security Council authorized the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), in carrying out the mandate conferred on it by paragraph 5 of that resolution, "... acting in self-defence, to take the necessary measures, including the use of force, in reply to bombardments against the safe areas by any of the parties ...". The safe areas had been declared by the Security Council in its resolution 824 of 6 May 1993. They included Sarajevo.

In paragraph 10 of resolution 836, the Security Council further decided that "... Member States, acting nationally or through regional organizations or arrangements, may take, under the authority of the Security Council and subject to close coordination with the Secretary-General and UNPROFOR, all necessary measures, through the use of air power, in and around the safe areas in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to support UNPROFOR in the performance of its mandate set out in paragraphs 5 and 9 above".

In the declaration of the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council held at NATO Headquarters, Brussels on 10-11 January 1994, the Heads of State and Government inter alia reaffirmed their "readiness under the authority of the United Nations Security Council and in accordance with the Alliance decisions of 2 and 9 August 1993, to carry out air strikes in order to prevent the strangulation of Sarajevo, the safe areas and other threatened areas in Bosnia-Herzegovina". You subsequently informed me that, whereas the North Atlantic Council had already authorized close air support, a further decision would be required for it to authorize air strikes. I reported this position to the Security Council in my letter of 28 January 1994 addressed to its President.

The mortar attacks last week against civilian targets in Sarajevo, at least one of which has been established by UNPROFOR to be the work of Bosnian Serb forces, make it necessary to prepare urgently for the use of air strikes to deter further such attacks. I should be grateful, therefore, if you could take action to obtain, at the earliest possible date, a decision by the North Atlantic Council to authorize the Commander-in-Chief of NATO's Southern Command to launch air strikes, at the request of the United Nations, against artillery or mortar positions in or around Sarajevo which are determined by UNPROFOR to be responsible for attacks against civilian targets in that city. The arrangements for the coordination of such air strikes would be elaborated through direct contacts between UNPROFOR Headquarters and NATO's Southern Command, as has already been done in the case of close air support for the self-defence of United Nations personnel in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I am today informing the members of the Security Council that I have addressed the above request to you.

(Signed) Boutros BOUTROS-GHALI